



**TAMWORTH
REGIONAL
COUNCIL**

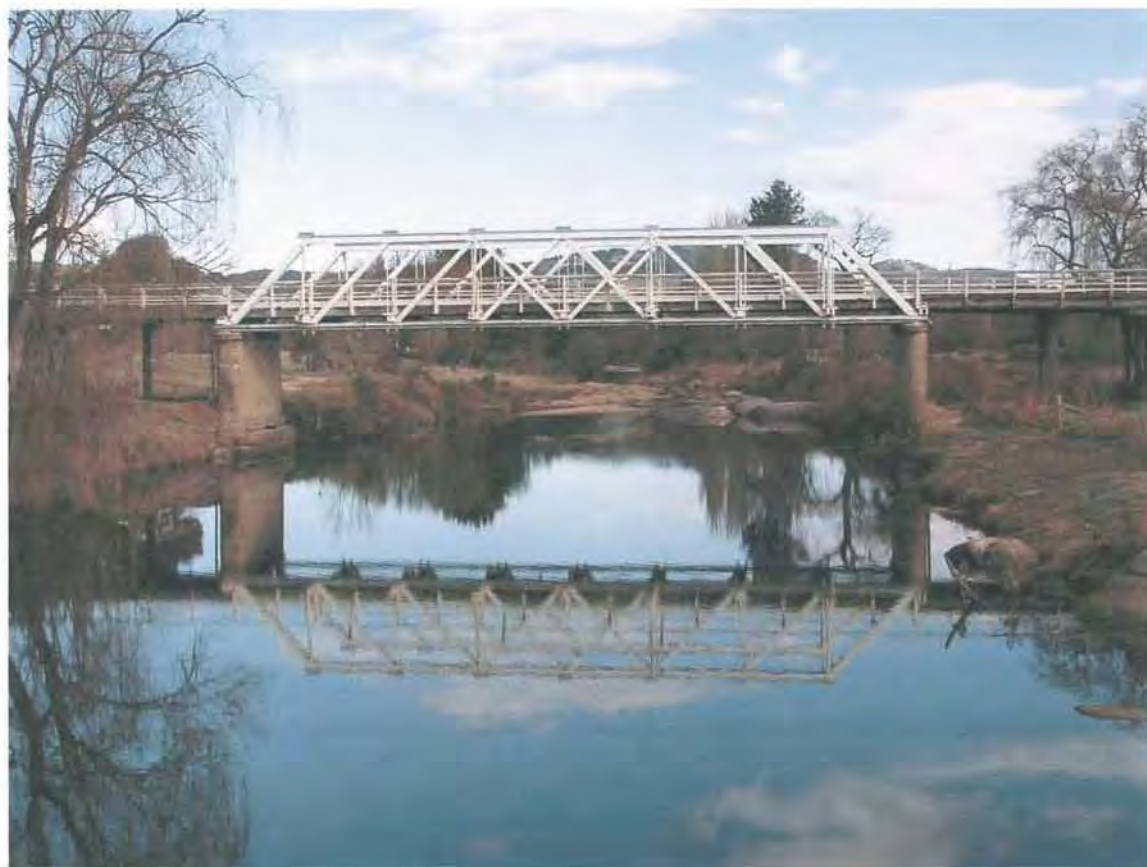
**CEREMONY REPORT & RE-ENACTMENT
for the**

BENDEMEER BRIDGE

as an

HISTORIC ENGINEERING MARKER

celebrating its centenary on 1 October 2005



This composite steel and timber Dare truss bridge over the MacDonald River
was opened on 29 September 1905.

Prepared by Don Fraser for
Engineering Heritage Australia (Newcastle),
Engineers Australia, and
Bendemeer Community Development Association
December 2005



Back to Bendemeer Weekend *1st-3rd October, 2005*

Bendemeer finds 100 reasons to celebrate

THIS long weekend don't miss the centenary of the Bendemeer Rd Bridge. Get Back to Bendy with a range of awesome activities for families and people of all ages.

The program over the four days includes a gala night, street markets, stalls, old working machinery displays, Devonshire teas, historic photo displays, art and craft demonstrations, including free stitch instruction lessons, and a tour of the Bendemeer Cemetery.

The weekend's official opening is on Saturday morning and will include re-enactments of the original speeches from the bridge opening in 1905, followed by a celebration dinner at the Bendemeer Town Hall.

Enjoy a three-course dinner, and be entertained by the Heartland Duo for only \$25 per head.

Dinner bookings can be made through Winston Doak on 6769 6693.

Tamworth Regional

Council's Col Murray will be re-enacting the speech of his great-great grandfather, who was vice-chairman of the original bridge committee.

Bridge centenary

Visitors will be coming from Australia-wide to celebrate the centenary of the bridge opening with local politicians also re-enacting the speeches of the original Members of Parliament.

Bendemeer has an abundance

of heritage buildings, and the weekend will include self-drive tours of heritage properties in and around Bendemeer.

For a copy of the program, pick one up from the Tamworth Visitor Centre or from around Bendemeer, or for further details contact event organiser Jo Osborne on 6769 6480.

Take a trip up the hill to Bendemeer to enjoy a great day out for the whole family.

Bendemeer in mood to party

By Rebecca Gracie

BENDEMEER will party all weekend with celebrations marking the centenary of the McDonald River bridge and 120 years since Bendemeer was proclaimed a village.

The Get Back to Bendy weekend includes a range of activities for families and people of all ages.

Included on the four-day program are street markets, stalls, old working machinery displays, Devonshire teas, historic photo displays, art and craft demonstrations and a Bendemeer cemetery tour.

On Friday night musician Andrew Clermont and guest Belinda Walmsley will entertain guests at the gala night at the town hall presented by the Hourglass Players.

The festivities' official opening is on Saturday afternoon at the bridge with re-enactments of the original opening speeches back in 1905, followed by a celebration dinner at the Bendemeer Town

Hall with entertainment by the Heartland Duo.

At 10.30am the Engineers of Australia will unveil a plaque at the Bendemeer bridge on a boulder near the historic landmark. A time capsule will be buried at 11am.

Tamworth Regional Council's Col Murray will be re-enacting the speech of his great great grandfather, who was vice-chairman of the original bridge committee, and local politicians will be filling the roles of other dignitaries of the time.

Bendemeer has an abundance of heritage buildings and the weekend will include self-drive tours of heritage properties in and around the village.

To get your hands on a copy of the various tour routes, pick one up from the Tamworth Visitor Centre or from around Bendemeer and for further details contact event organiser Jo Osborne on 6769 6480.

Centenary of the Bendemeer Road Bridge

Programme

FRIDAY 30th SEPTEMBER, 2005

BENDEMEER COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE.

10.00a.m.-4.30 p.m.
Morning & Afternoon
Teas & Lunches.

10 a.m.-5 p.m. Haystone Cottage
Craft & Visitor Information Centre.

GALA NIGHT FOR OPENING OF THE CENTENARY WEEKEND.

BENDEMEER TOWN HALL. 6.00 pm.

Doors open. 6.30 p.m. Dinner. 7.30 p.m.

"THE HOURGLASS PLAYERS" present A GALA
NIGHT DINNER & SHOW.

Featuring ANDREW CLERMONT

\$25.00 P.P. Reservations essential.

6769 6558. BYO

SATURDAY 1ST October, 2005.

BENDEMEER COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE

7.30 a.m.- 4.30 p.m. Breakfast,
Morning Teas, Lunches & Afternoon
Teas, Gifts, Souvenirs.

STREET MARKETS

9 a.m.-4p.m.

OLD WORKING MACHINERY DISPLAY

9a.m.-4.p.m. Anne & Winston Doak

RIVERSIDE REST CARAVAN PARK

9 a.m.-4 p.m. Morning & Afternoon
Teas, Lunches. Kay Johnson - Quilting,
Heather McLaren. Thelma Brown
(The Tea Towel Lady)

BENDEMEER COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE

10. a.m.- 4.30 p.m.

Mandy Coles. International Medium.

BENDEMEER TOWN HALL

Gold Coin Donation.

10 a.m.-4.00 p.m. Display of
photographs & history of various
families. Morning & Afternoon
Teas by C.W.A.

HAYSTONE COTTAGE CRAFT & VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

10 am-6.00 pm

Come and
purchase a Back to
Bendy Embroidery Kit And
receive a FREE STITCH INSTRUCTION LESSON.

First Class 11 a.m.

"ENGINEERS AUSTRALIA"

10.30- 11 a.m.

Plaquing ceremony at the MacDonald River Bridge.

Welcome by Tam. Reg. Council Mayor.

TIME CAPSULE CEREMONY.

11.a.m.

Bendemeer Bridge open for all foot traffic.

11a.m.- 2.15 p.m.

BENDEMEER CEMETERY TOUR.

Childrens' Activities on the banks of the
MacDonald River behind the Hotel.

11.30 - 12.30 p.m.

HAYSTONE COTTAGE CRAFT.

1 p.m.

Free stitch instruction lesson.

BENDEMEER CEMETERY TOUR.

1.30 - 2.30 p.m.

HAYSTONE COTTAGE CRAFT.

2.00 p.m.

Free stitch instruction lesson.

BRIDGE CLOSURE FOR RE-ENACTMENT CEREMONY.

2.15 - 3p.m.

Participants for ceremony to meet on the bridge.

2.45 p.m.

Re-enactment of 1905 ceremony commences. 3p.m.

Politicians arrive at Bendemeer Bridge. 3.15p.m.

Welcoming speeches by "1905" Committee.

Cutting of the ribbon etc.

3.15 - 3.45 p.m.

Organised festivities then cease to prepare for the

Celebration Dinner at the Town Hall. 4.00 p.m.

HAYSTONE COTTAGE CRAFT

5.00 P.M. Free Stitch Instruction Lesson.

BENDEMEER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
ASSOC. Will be your hosts for the
Re-Enactment of the 1905

OFFICIAL CELEBRATION DINNER 7.p.m.

Guests gather at the Town Hall for pre-dinner
drinks. 7.30 p.m. Dinner. \$25.00p.

Reservations essential. 6769 6673. B.Y.O.

Entertainment provided.

SUNDAY 2nd OCTOBER, 2005.

BENDEMEER HOTEL.

7.30 a.m. Breakfast with the Poets.

BENDEMEER COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE

7.30 a.m.-4.30 p.m..

Breakfast, Morning Teas, Lunch, &
Afternoon Teas. Gifts, Souvenirs.

OLD WORKING MACHINERY DISPLAY.

9.00 a.m.- 4.p.m.

CHURCH SERVICES.

8.00 a.m. Holy Innocents Church.

Frederick Street.

RIVERSIDE REST CARAVAN PARK.

9a.m.-4 p.m.

Morning & Afternoon Teas, Lunches.

Kay Johnston Quilting. Heather McLaren

Thelma Brown (The Tea Towel Lady).

BENDEMEER RODEO GROUND.

9 a.m.- Noon.

Cattle Team Penning.

Sheep Dog Trials.

BENDEMEER TOWN HALL.

Gold Coin Donation.

10 a.m.- 4.30p.m. Photographic Display.

Morning & Afternoon Teas by C.W.A.

BENDEMEER COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE

10 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.

Mandy Coles International Medium.

HAYSTONE COTTAGE CRAFT & VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

Free Stitch Instruction Lesson. 11.00 a.m.

11.30 - 12.30 p.m.

CEMETERY TOUR. 11.30 - 12.30 p.m.

HAYSTONE COTTAGE CRAFT.

1pm / 3pm / 5pm

Free Stitch Instruction Lesson.

HISTORIC SIGHTS TO SEE AND DO IN

BENDEMEER: St. Andrew's Church.

St. Stephen's Church of England. - Police Station. -

General Store. - Haning.

Longford. - Old Butchers Shop. - Site of Original

School. - Coach House. - Former Inn & P.O. -
The Saw Mill. - War Memorial. - Cemetery. -
Bendemeer Hotel.

MONDAY 3RD OCTOBER, 2005

BENDEMEER RODEO GROUND.

7 - 9 a.m. Farewell "Sausage Sizzle"

Saus Sandwich \$2, Tea/Coffee \$1

RIVERSIDE REST CARAVAN PARK.

9.a.m.

Morning & Afternoon Teas & Lunches.

Kay Johnston. Quilting.

Thelma Brown (The Tea Towel Lady).

BENDEMEER COMMUNITY CO-OPERATIVE.

10.00a.m.-4.00p.m.

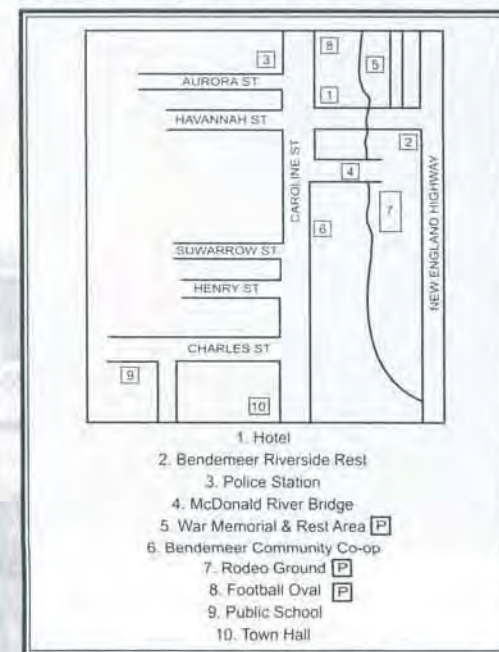
BENDEMEER TOWN HALL

10.00- 4.p.m. Gold Coin Donation.

Photographic Display.

For more information please contact Joanne
Osborne on 02 6769 6480.

The Bendemeer Community Development
Association reserve the right to change the
Program should alterations occur.



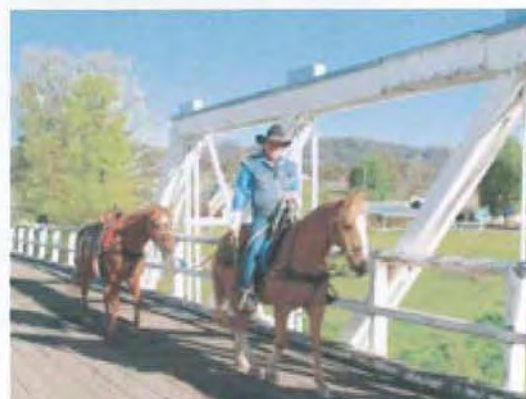
Proudly Supported by:



HISTORIC BENDEMEER



1836



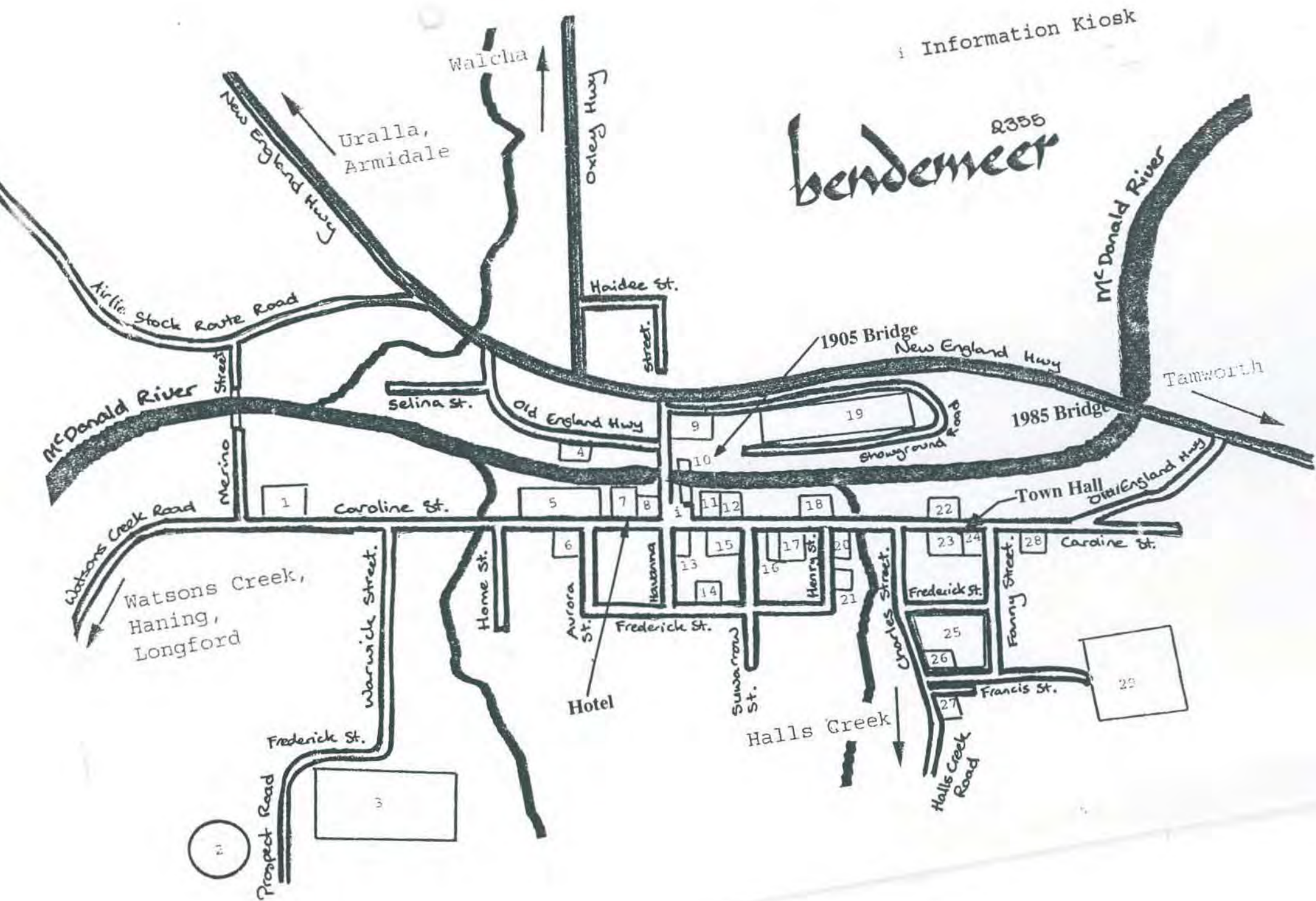
2005



1864



1908 Town Hall, venue of Gala Dinner and Celebration Dinner



OUR TOWN:

- 1 Sawmill – begun on this site in 1953. Currently owned and operated by Richard, Bryan and David Farrell
- 2 Tank
- 3 Cemetery – earliest gravestone is for Mrs Maher, 1873
- 4 ANZAC Memorial Gates and Park – gates erected in 1927. Officially opened by William Cranston Murray who died three months later, aged 77, and dedicated by Robert Dangar Dixon
- 5 Football Oval and Town Tennis Courts
- 6 Police Station – present building built in 1873. First trooper stationed in Bendemeer was Constable Herbert in 1856
- 7 Bendemeer Hotel – original building (part of present ground floor) built by Robert Murray and James McCrossin as the "MacDonald Inn" about 1854. From 1870 was known as "Glover's Inn" for Thomas and Francis Glover, then from 1902 as the "Federal Hotel". Possibly called "Hotel Bendemeer" from about 1946
- 8 Bowling Green
- 9 Riverside Rest Caravan Park
- 10 Bendemeer Bridge
- 11 Old Bowery Inn - built by Archie Hamilton in 1934 as a shop and café and currently home of the Bendemeer Coop
- 12 Old Petrol Station – built by BP during 1950s, with garage next door (operating until recently as the NRMA Depot)
- 13 Uniting (Ex-Presbyterian) Church – first church built in Bendemeer and opened June 1865
- 14 Catholic Church – first Catholic Church was built about 1881 in Home St. The current church in Frederick St was built and opened in 1968
- 15 Ex-Caltex Service Station / Ex-Supermarket – the first service station built in Bendemeer, during the early 1980s, and operated until 1989 when remodelled as the Supermarket with Post Office until 1999
- 16 Butchers Shop – built in 1939 by Ned Owens and Bill Doring and operated until 1989
- 17 Ex-General Store – built by John and Martha Glover in 1872 and operated until 2004
- 18 Old School Residence – with school were built in 1882 on the same site as the first school (from 1860).
- 19 Rodeo Grounds
- 20 Old Post Office – built in 1946 for Richard Wilkinson using bricks from the old school which had been opposite, and operated here until 1989
- 21 CWA Hall – the Association began in 1951. The Hall was built and opened in 1961
- 22 Ex-Telegraph Hotel – built next to the then Cobb & Co Station by August Stahlhut in 1864, this hotel was later known as the "Ingles Hotel" and operated until 1892 when it became a private residence. Mostly destroyed by fire in 1905 it was rebuilt using the original brickwork
- 23 Town Hall – built in 1908 for Tait Blair by Albert Hunt then purchased by Cockburn Shire in 1953 and operated by the Bendemeer community since 1954
- 24 Anglican Church – built and dedicated in 1923
- 25 School – built and opened in 1923 then additions built and opened in 1963
- 26 Guide Hall / Preschool – building began in 1980, completed and opened in August 1984 with Guides operating until the unit closed in 1996. Now home of the Bendemeer Preschool Inc
- 27 Ex-Four Seasons Gallery
- 28 Haystone Cottage – begun in 1990 and home of the Bendemeer Tourist Information Centre
- 29 Tip

THE BENDEMEER BRIDGES

Quality of some succeeding images is poor due to low setting on the digital camera



1865 Laminated timber arches, replaced 1905



The plaqued bridge, 1905 extant composite Dare truss, bypassed 1985



1985 prestressed concrete bridge, east of 1905 bridge

29/8/05

Henry Harvey ARE – Designer



Harvey Dare (1867-1949) was one of Australia's foremost engineers of the late colonial period and the early 20th century. He was born in Goulburn but attended Sydney Grammar School. He received his engineering education at Sydney University's School of Engineering under Prof. W H Warren, graduating with a BE and University Medal in 1888. In 1894 he gained a second Medal for his ME Degree. He assisted in Prof. Warren's extensive programme of testing most of the timber species of NSW for their engineering properties which proved so useful in the design of timber infrastructure such as the timber truss bridges. In February 1889 he joined the NSW Department of Public Works.

By 1901, he had been associated with many major bridges under the direction of Percy Allan and E M de Burgh, and had become a bridge specialist. In 1905 he developed the composite timber and steel truss that now bears his name. In 2004, 27 were still in service with six on the State Heritage Register. Harvey Dare and J J C Bradfield were closely involved with the preliminaries for the Sydney Harbour Bridge. He pioneered a distinctive type of bascule bridge which had counterweights moving down a curved track so as to maintain balance with the opening span.

In 1910 he was transferred to the Irrigation and Drainage Branch as Principal Assistant Engineer to L A B Wade and was engaged in preparations for the Murrumbidgee Irrigation Scheme including Burrinjuck Dam.

In 1911 he was appointed Engineer for Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage and assumed responsibility for planning three dams of the Upper Nepean Scheme (Cordeaux, Avon and Nepean). He concluded his career with Public Works Department as Chief Engineer for National Works.

With the establishment of the Water Conservation and Irrigation Commission in 1913 he was appointed Chief Engineer and then the first Commissioner in 1916 during which time he oversaw the completion of Burrinjuck Dam. In 1923 he represented NSW on the River Murray Commission.

He was prominent in professional bodies, receiving two Telford Premiums from the Institution of Civil Engineers, London and the Peter Nicol Russell Medal from the Institution of Engineers, Australia. He retired in May 1935 after 47 years in public service. He was one of Australia's outstanding civil engineers.



Sydney Division

PLAQUING CEREMONY TO CELEBRATE THE

CENTENARY OF BENDEMEER BRIDGE

**as an
Historic Engineering Marker
Saturday 1 October, 2005**



This Dare truss bridge was opened on 29 September 1905

Proudly supported by the Tamworth Regional Council

PROGRAMME

- 10.30am Welcome Mayor James Treloar or
Deputy Mayor Phil Betts
Tamworth Regional Council.
- 10.35 Ruth Mathews Historic Bendemeer and its bridges.
- 10.45 Frank Oakes Oakes Brothers bridge builders.
Introducing other bridge descendants.
- 10.55 Malcolm Clark or nominee, Engineers Australia Newcastle -
what is Engineers Australia and
its Historic Engineering Plaquing
Programme.
- 11.00 Unveiling the plaque..... Photographs, speakers group
then other combinations.
- 11.10 Close and refreshments.

PLAQUE CITATION

Public Works engineer Harvey Dare designed this composite steel and timber truss bridge. It was constructed by prominent bridge builder W F Oakes and opened on 29 September 1905. The truss type, now known as a Dare truss, was the zenith of timber truss development being technically superior to previous types. The bridge was in service for the New England Highway for 80 years before being bypassed in 1985.

The Institution of Engineers, Australia
Tamworth Regional Council
Community of Bendemeer, 2005

Festival Sponsor



Walter Frank OAKES a career in bridge building

(Notes from Malcolm and Peter Oakes)

W F Oakes, in partnership with his brother Percy, was a prominent and successful bridge builder in New South Wales during the first 25 years of the 20th century. They appeared to have followed on from their father, William Frank's bridge building exploits in New Zealand in the 1880s. Young Walter Frank showed scholarly skills by receiving the prestigious UK award of Whitworth Scholar, endowed by famed 19th Industrialist Sir Joseph Whitworth (Whitworth screw thread).

The Oakes brothers specialised in heavy timber constructions mainly in like structures of wharves and bridges. Family records show in excess of 60 projects 1905-1933 mostly in the North East quarter of NSW. The range of bridge sizes stretched from small timber beam structures for Local Government Councils, through a series of timber truss bridges plus a large steel truss bridge, all for the Department of Public Works, such works as,

Allan timber truss bridges

- 1897 Dyke Creek, Kempsey
1897 Tantawanglo Creek, Kameruka
1900 Styx River, Jeogla - **EXTANT**
1920 Murrumbidgee River, Narrandera

de Burgh composite timber truss bridges

- 1902 Black Creek, Rothbury - **EXTANT**
1902 Webbers Creek - **EXTANT**

Dare composite timber truss bridges

- 1905 MacDonald River, Bendemeer - **EXTANT**
1906 Williams River, Dungog - **EXTANT**
1908 Colemans Bridge, Lismore - **EXTANT**

Steel truss bridge

- 1908 Irving Bridge, Casino

The Irving Bridge may be seen as his crowning achievement. Feted at a farewell function, he was made an honorary citizen of the town. He received many commendations for his work including that from eminent Public Works engineer E M de Burgh. Bendemeer bridge is the only EXTANT Oakes timber truss bridge not in service but it is a worthy representative of the contribution he made to road infrastructure 100 years ago.



W F Oakes
(Frank Oakes photo)

THE PLAQUING CEREMONY



Cnr James Treloar, Mayor, Tamworth Regional Council, opened proceedings.



Joanne Osborne, President, Bendemeer Community Development Association, welcoming all.



Ruth Mathews spoke about Bendemeer's three bridges.



Frank Oakes, grandson, spoke on behalf of the Oakes family in attendance, about bridge builder W F Oakes and their pride in his achievements.



Malcolm Clark, Engineers Australia, Newcastle Division, spoke about the organisation and its Historic Engineering Plaquing Programme. He proclaimed the bridge an Historic Engineering Marker.



The plaque unveiled with Peter Cockbain (left) representing Engineering Heritage Australia, Mayor Treloar, Frank Oakes, Jo Osborne and Ruth Mathews. Foreground is the Time Capsule pit.



The plaque.

"Public Works engineer Harvey Dare designed this composite steel and timber truss bridge. It was constructed by prominent bridge builder W F Oakes and opened on 29 September 1905. The truss type, now known as a Dare truss, was the zenith of Timber truss development, being technically superior to previous types. The bridge was in service for the New England Highway for 80 years before being bypassed in 1985."



Members of Engineers Australia, Newcastle Division, l to r
Bill Jordan, Malcolm Clark and Peter Cockbain.



Oakes men, descendants of bridge building brothers W F and Percy Oakes, l to r
 Malcolm (grandson of W F), Peter (grandson of Percy), Frank (grandson of W F,
 elder brother of Malcolm), Alistair (son of Malcolm) and Geoffrey (cousin of Peter),

and joined below by wives
 Frances (Frank) and Sandra (Geoffery).





In period dress are Loretta Satterly, Ruth Mathews and Dianne Dyer.

THE TIME CAPSULE



95-year old Esma O'Toole loading the time capsule at base of the bridge plaque.

THE OPENING RE-ENACTMENT



The call to assemble.



Attendees ready for the opening re-enactment.



Descendants of the 1905 Bridge Committee.



The VIPs l to r Col Murray (Tamworth Regional Council), Tony Windsor (Federal MP) and Peter Draper (State MLA).



Descendants of the Official Party of the 1905 opening ceremony.
 Peter Dixon (wheelchair), Gil Dixon (electric scooter) cutting the ribbon,
 standing on right Wal Murray, Bernie Reid and Cedric Fisher (order?)
 VIPs standing behind are Tony Windsor, Col Murray and Peter Draper.



Both descendant groups.



Centenary celebration cake made by Faith Dixon.



Celebration cake cut by June Dally-Watkins and Tess Osborne.

OLD BENDEMEER BRIDGE -CENTENARY

They came from places far and wide
Wives and husbands side by side
Some singles too, both young and old
To build a future strong and bold.
They chose this village of Bendemeer
To work and raise their families here
Before this day a century ago
They thought, "What shall we do to make it grow?"
The problematic MacDonald River
Left no answer to deliver
When the tide was down it was alright Jack
But when it flooded - no way back!
Hence the "Bendy Bridge" was born
Despite some criticism, even scorn
But "The Powers That Be" pressed on and on
Until this mighty job was done.
It's been a focal point since then
For visitors et. cetera, especially when
Their forebears heritage they sought to trace
Meet friends and relatives face to face
A place for kids to swim and fish
And realise each childhood wish
Teen' lovers making their first date
Leading to a life-long fate
"Wrinklies" stroll down "Memory Lane"
And act like they were young again
All sorts of good things happen here
Fulfilling dreams of yester year.
Now upon this auspicious date
We've come together to recreate
And keep this historic occasion alive
To commemorate 29.9.05
So welcome descendants large and small
And a toast to settlers who were first of all.

Charles R. Mathews

17th June, 2005.

Riverside Rest CARAVAN PARK

Incorporating
Fragrance Tea Room



Serenely situated alongside the beautiful McDonald River, with a backdrop of majestic mountain ranges, our very special spot offers you the opportunity to really relax and enjoy our idyllic country lifestyle and hospitality. A country caravan park just like they used to be!

Ideal as

- * A destination point
- * A journey's break
- * A "special" weekend
- * A day trip



YOUR HOSTS DI & GREG SMART

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